

The YEA *and* NAY
of
Correspondence
ETIQUETTE



WHITE & WYCKOFF MFG. CO.

Makers of Autocrat Stationery

HOLYOKE, MASSACHUSETTS



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FOREWORD

DO do the right thing at the right time is an indication that one possesses that enviable gift of tact. Many people can make clever or witty remarks, but comparatively few of them can put their brilliant thoughts upon paper; and paper lives. "The gentle art of letter writing" is not dead, as many complain; it is steadily gaining in importance with all folk who consider social or business amenities. The details of stationery and ink have as much to do with the general appearance of a letter as have the hand writing or phrasing. Indeed, the conviction that one is absolutely correct in the former often aids in the flood of thought.

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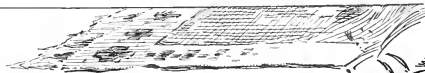
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Good Form in Correspondence



STYLES in the shape and size of polite correspondence paper and envelopes change almost from season to season, and the woman who desires her correspondence invariably to reflect the correct usage, must provide herself with paper, cards and envelopes in variety to suit the occasions of her social life and sphere. To fail in strict observance of these considerations is to lay one's self open to a charge of ignorance of the proprieties which no woman would willingly invite.

For instance, large size paper must not be used when small size is required. The envelope that, in shape and cut was proper a few years ago, is to-day impossible to the woman careful of social considerations. The finish of a correspondence paper should not be so refined as



to lack character; and yet certain fabric finishes may easily be so grossly exaggerated in effect as to degenerate into vulgarity. Polite correspondence papers should be possessed of sufficient texture to preserve, in the handling of the mails, the neatness of the missive as originally deposited in the post; but on the one hand the coarseness of the exaggerated bulk of some papers is as offensive to good taste as the meagre insufficiency of others.

Between extremes in all things stands the *via media* — the safe and sane middle way. In social correspondence papers this middle ground, which insures correct usage but, at the same time, affords abundant scope for the exercise of individuality, can only assuredly be attained by the use of papers and envelopes insured in absolute compliance with the rigid requirements of the correct mode.

White & Wyckoff's Autocrat Linen, while affording a wide range of personal preference, as to finish, color and tint, is absolutely correct in its several shapes and sizes, for every correspondence requirement. Such a writing paper must be desired by every one to whom character and breeding are words of meaning.

The Letters of Today

Communications by paper are always of a more or less formal nature. Individuality may enter into correspondence materials only within certain well defined bounds. Eccentricity is vulgarity.

Square sheets and oblong envelopes are now used by fashionable women. Gray-white is the prevailing tint, although a few people prefer the various blue tones.

Soft, glazed or dull finish, or parchment finish, are the correct surfaces.

Black ink is always used for writing notes or letters. The quality of the ink is most important, a deep heavy black being imperative.

Letters should never, under any circumstances, be cross written. If one sheet is insufficient, use a second.

In writing, begin on the first page, then go to the fourth, thence to the second, and close on the third. It is quite correct, after the first and



fourth pages have been covered, to turn the sheet about and begin at the then left side of the second page and continue across the interior of the sheet; or, if you prefer, the sheet can be turned about after the first page has been covered, writing on the second page, and continuing on the third, and then again turning so as to have the fourth page conform to the first.

A woman does not use her monogram or crested paper when writing to a tradesman, and she often has still another grade of strictly business order with which to communicate with her attorneys.

When a postscript is added to a letter, the initials of the signature follow, or are placed under it.

Postage should never be enclosed for a reply, unless it is a strictly business communication.

The names of cities are never abbreviated, nor the address given in numerals, unless very long. The address may be engraved (or written) in three different places: the top of the first page; the lower left hand corner of the third, or the lower left hand corner of the fourth page. The most usual of these is on the first page, about three-quarters of an inch from the top, and in the center or at the right hand corner.

Forms of Salutation

Of the various forms of salutation in vogue "My dear" is considered more formal than "Dear". To an acquaintance should be written, "My dear Mrs. Brevoort". When more intimate, "Dear Mrs. Brevoort". To an absolute stranger, the full name should be written,

Mrs. Philip Brevoort,
Dear Madam:—

A wife is never addressed by her husband's title, such as "Mrs. President Taft". The titles of General, Doctor, etc., belong exclusively to the husband, and he is always addressed by his title, save by very intimate friends.

A girl of any age is addressed as "Miss"; and a boy is "Master" until he is twelve years of age.



Letters to tradesmen are generally written in the third person:

Mrs. Albert H. Benton,

Twenty-two East Twenty-fourth Street,
would like Park & Tilford to send her ten pounds of their best Mocha
coffee. Enclosed find check for the amount.

Strictly business letters are written in the first person and are
addressed:

To a business house of two or more partners:

Messrs. Smith, Green & Lee,
No. 1 Wall St., New York.
Dear Sirs: or Gentlemen:

To an individual business man:

Mr. Andrew Parsons,
No. 6 Broad St., New York.
My dear Sir: or Dear Sir:

A business communication addressed to the President of the United States or to the Governor of the State, begins "Sir" instead of "Dear Sir".

The American Cardinal is addressed as "Your Eminence", an Archbishop as "Your Grace", and the Bishop (Catholic or Episcopalian) as "The Right Reverend" preceding the Christian or surname of the prelate. A King or a Queen is addressed "Sir" or "Madam".

Forms of Conclusion

A woman signs her notes and letters "Cordially yours" or "Yours sincerely" in writing to a friend or acquaintance, and to relatives and very intimate friends "Yours affectionately" or "Yours with love". She never signs her name with her title "Miss" or "Mrs" unless it is put in brackets before the name, and this is allowable only when writing to an absolute stranger.

A man writing to a woman friend is generally "Faithfully" or "Faithfully yours". To an intimate man friend he signs "Sincerely yours".

Business letters conclude with "Yours truly", "Yours very truly" or "Very truly yours".

A letter to the President closes, "I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant". A letter addressed to a King or Queen concludes "I have the honor to be, with profound veneration, Madam, your Majesty's



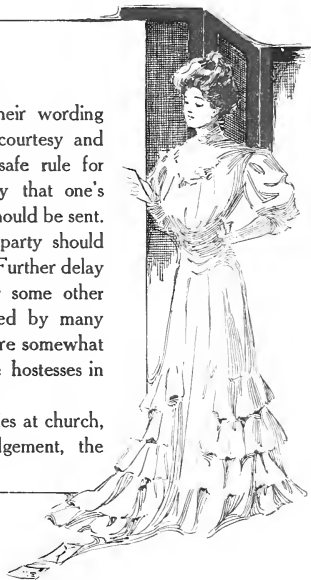
most faithful subject and dutiful servant". To Princes or Princesses of royal blood, conclude with "I have the honor to be, Madam (or Sir) your royal highness's most obedient and humble servant". To Dukes, Marquises, Earls, Viscounts and Barons, conclude with "I have the honor to be, your humble, obedient servant". To a Baronet, conclude "I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient servant". To an English Archbishop or a Bishop "I have the honor to be, with the highest respect, your Grace, the most humble, obedient servant". To a Lord Mayor, "I have the honor to be, my Lord, your Lordship's obedient servant".

The Invitations of To-Day

Invitations are the currency of the social world. Their wording and style form are invariably cordially courteous. Equal courtesy and promptness should be observed in answering them. A safe rule for guidance is, that whenever it seems obviously necessary that one's hostess should know how many guests to expect, an answer should be sent.

Invitations to dinner, luncheon, breakfast, or a theatre party should be acknowledged within twenty-four hours of their receipt. Further delay is only excusable through the absence of the recipient, or some other equally good cause. The initials R. S. V. P. are regarded by many as a somewhat offensive reminder to be courteous. They are somewhat out of fashion nowadays, although some of the most notable hostesses in New York still use them.

Invitations for receptions, wedding ceremonies at church, afternoon teas, etc., require no acknowledgement, the



presence of the person invited serving as an acceptance; and in the case of the receptions or teas, cards sent at the time the entertainment is held, serve in lieu of the individual's presence.

A young girl never invites men in her own name to any entertainment, however informal; but she may write over her own signature that her mother or chaperon desires her to extend such an invitation.

Invitations to formal functions are by engraved cards which have blank spaces left for the name, and sometimes for other details of the entertainment. They are, of course, in the third person, and require answers in the same person. A general invitation card reads:

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Lawrence Townley
request the pleasure of
(blank for name of guest to be written in)
company (may state nature of function in print or writing)
on (insert date—engraved or written)
at (state hour) o'clock
Twenty-two East Twenty-fourth Street.

When receptions are given in honor of a distinguished guest, it is usual to preface above the invitation thus:

To meet
The Honorable James Brice.

Forms of Invitations

The word "ball" is never used in a private entertainment, the object of the invitation being indicated by the words "Dancing" or "Cotillion" in one corner of the card.

Mrs. Richard Lawrence Townley
At Home
Thursday evening, January the twenty-fourth
at ten o'clock
Cotillion at eleven Twenty-two East Twenty-fourth Street.

Another form leaves blank for guest's name:

Mrs. Richard Lawrence Townley
requests the pleasure of
(blank for guest's name)
Company
on Wednesday evening, January the twenty-fourth
at ten o'clock
Dancing Twenty-two East Twenty-fourth Street



When bachelors are hosts, they do not represent themselves as "At Home", but their cards of invitation "Request the honor of" a guest's presence.

When an informal dinner is to be given, and indeed on most ordinary occasions, the hostess writes:

My dear Mrs. Green:—

Will you and Mr. Green give us the pleasure of your company at dinner on Wednesday evening, January sixteenth, at half past seven o'clock?

Trusting that nothing will disappoint us of seeing you, I am

Yours sincerely,

January the second.

Louise Townley.

Informal dance invitations are often written in a friendly note:

My dear Mrs. Townley:—

Will you give me the pleasure of your company at my little dance, on Tuesday evening, February the twelfth, at nine o'clock?

The cotillion will begin at ten, and we hope that no previous engagement may deprive us of the pleasure of seeing you.

Yours very cordially,

January the twenty-ninth.

Mary Gilbert.

Invitations to dancing classes and subscription dances are acknowledged to the person to whom one is indebted for their receipt. The patron sending it should enclose with the card a note saying she hopes the recipient will be able to use it.

All house party invitations are given in the name of the hostess, though the term "house party" is never used in such an invitation. When the host extends invitations, as he may occasionally, he usually includes his wife's name. The hostess usually says:

My dear Mrs. Wrenwick:—

I am asking a few friends to Cedar Cliff for the week end. (Then mention the friends expected, and the diversion of the neighborhood, so that the guest may know what clothes to provide.) I hope you have no previous engagement for next Sunday, and that you will come down as early Friday afternoon as possible.

Very cordially yours,

Margaret Martin.

The hostess takes care to enclose a time table with each invitation, indicating the train or boat.



Replies to invitations are written in the same style and in the same degree of formality as is the invitation. An invitation should never be accepted provisionally. A definite reply should be sent immediately on receipt of the invitation. In declining an invitation one usually says:

Mrs. Townley regrets that a previous engagement prevents her acceptance of Mrs. Smith's charming invitation for luncheon on April seventeenth.

(or)

Mrs. Townley regrets her inability
to accept
Mrs. Smith's
charming invitation for luncheon
on April twenty-seventh

Forms of Acceptance are:

Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Townley
accept with pleasure
Mrs. Frank Smith's
invitation
for Friday, April nineteenth

(or)

My dear Mrs. Smith:—

It will give me much pleasure to accept your kind invitation
for Wednesday evening.

Yours sincerely,
Mary Townley.

Wedding Invitations

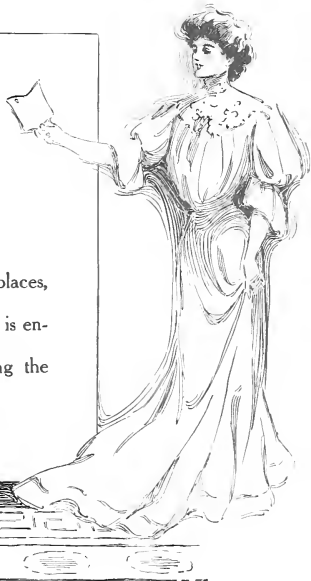
Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Townley
request the honor of
Miss Justine Green's
presence
at the marriage of their daughter
Celestine
and
Mr. Paul Mortimer Gilbert
on Wednesday, April Seventeenth
at twelve o'clock at Grace Church

When invitations are to be sent to acquaintances in other places,
the name of the town and state are added.

When a church wedding is followed by a reception, a card is enclosed with an invitation to the ceremony.

Sometimes cards accompany a wedding invitation bearing the bride's future address:

At Home
Tuesday, after May seventeenth
Seventy East Thirty-sixth Street
New York



Wedding Announcements

Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Townley
have the honor to announce to, etc.
(giving the date and place of the marriage).

Enclosed with this announcement is an "At Home" card.

If the bride is an orphan, her eldest unmarried brother announces the wedding. Failing him, the next nearest relative, or her guardian. In case she has no one to announce the wedding, the bride and bridegroom announce it jointly.

When a wedding is solemnized in the house instead of in a church, the invitations are engraved similarly, save that for the house "The pleasure of the guest" is requested instead of the "The honor of their presence" being asked.

Invitations to an informal house wedding are generally written by the hostess:

My dear Mrs. Brevoort:

It will give my husband and me much pleasure if you and Mr. Brevoort will come to the very quiet marriage of our daughter Celestine, and your nephew, Mr. Paul Gilbert, at three o'clock, next Wednesday.

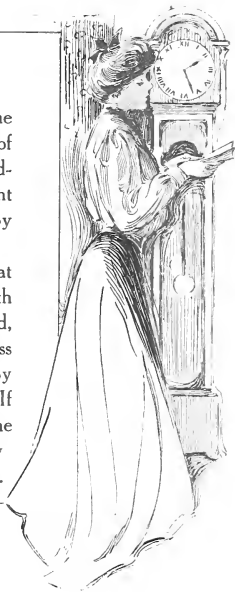
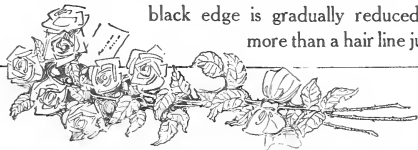
We are asking but a few of our friends, and hope to welcome you and Mr. Brevoort among them.

Cordially yours,
Mary Townley.

Letters of Condolence

There is no stereotyped form for a letter of condolence. The terms employed are dictated wholly by circumstances and the degree of intimacy. The letter should always be brief and written to suit individual cases, and express heartfelt sympathy. Such letters should be sent soon after the funeral has taken place. They are always answered by their recipient, a relative, or an intimate friend.

In the use of mourning stationery, there is no distinct rule, save that the border shall be wide enough to denote the sentiments. The width of black may vary according to the nearness of the relative mourned, the broadest being about half an inch in width, usually indicating the loss of a husband or wife. The next in width is for a child, followed by narrower edges for parents, brothers and sisters, and grandparents. If mourning is continued for a year and a half or longer, the width of the black edge is gradually reduced, so that it is scarcely more than a hair line just before it is laid aside.



Announcing a Birth

In announcing a birth, the infant's card is tied to its parent's card with either white, pale blue or pink ribbon.

Although christenings are becoming more and more popular among the smart element in society, the invitations for them are rarely engraved. Sometimes a formal note is sent, requesting the honor of the presence of the guest at the church, or a friendly note is written in the mother's name.

The Business Woman

The business woman is not entirely exempt from society obligations, but she is not tied down by severe rules. It is understood that she cannot always pay a dinner call, and she, therefore, sends a note of thanks within a couple of days after the dinner. She can only send cards instead of leaving them in person. She does this as soon as the death of an acquaintance or friend is announced, and to intimate friends and to those to whom she is under obligations, whenever she changes her home address. She always sends cards with a few words of kindly inquiry in the case of some illness or misfortune which may have befallen an acquaintance.

The Visiting Card

The use of cards socially is charged with many niceties, and too much taste in the preparation and discrimination in the use of these *ambassadeurs de Societe* is impossible to the socially considerable man or woman. Styles change, both in visiting cards and the use of them, yet certain forms of cards and certain uses of them have always been known as correct to ladies and gentlemen. "Fads" in visiting cards have no place in the lives of socially desirable men and women. The keynote of the tone of the visiting card is plainness, however elegant that plainness may be. Anything ornate or pretentious is abhorrent.

The imprinting of the name upon the card calls for one's nicest discrimination as to the style of letter to be used. It must invariably be engraved. The form of letter chosen must be adhered to throughout.

Fashion just now sanctions the block letter, the richness and legibility of which are advantages somewhat offset by its angularity of outline.



Script letters are beautiful when properly engraved, and are always dignified. Care should be taken to avoid choice of a letter having up-and-down strokes so hair-like as to be not only devoid of positive character, but hard to read as well.

The Old English letter is rich in effect without being ornate, its peculiarities of design making it well adapted to the card of a woman of intellectual tastes and artistic tendencies. This letter is not any too easy to read, and it must therefore, be used with effectual restraint.

The prefix "Mrs." should never be omitted from the card of the married woman, nor that of "Miss" from the card of the unmarried one.

The card of the young woman does not have a calling day.

The girl who has not entered society makes use of a card only among her friends at school.

The debutante has no card, for she makes her mother's company for two years after her coming out, and her name appears under that of her mother, on a card which indicates her reception day and her address.

The eldest unmarried daughter, has her own card as soon as her next younger sister makes her debut, the younger daughter's name then appearing on her mother's card.

The eldest daughter, if unmarried, is entitled to engrave her cards without her christian or baptismal name—as, for instance, *Miss Grosvenor*. A younger daughter's name is given in full.

The husband's full name, with the wife's reception day, should be engraved in the lower left margin of the card. The address should be placed in the lower right margin.

A woman's professional or honorary title should be reserved for her business cards alone. *Dr. Laura Richards* is correct for the lady's professional cards, *Miss (or Mrs.) Laura Richards* for social use.

The house address, where given, is always engraved in the lower right margin of the card. If both a home address and another are given, the place for the latter is the lower left corner, for the former, in the lower right corner.

A widow's card may be engraved with her name as she wrote it during her husband's lifetime, or it may appear with her surname preceded by her own baptismal names.





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